

☐ KHOBAR

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were touched in other ways by the incident had similar thoughts.

The day after the bombing, SSgt David Bourgeois, 341st Medical Operations Squadron, was stopped on a military charter plane at Dhahran en route to Al Kharj, Saudi Arabia. He also heard about the bombing in flight, and said he was leary.

"I didn't know what to expect, and wasn't sure if there was going to be another attack at another time," he said.

While waiting on the tarmac in a processing line, he said, "I felt a sense of sorrow for those servicemembers' families, and that they had to go through something like that.

"It definitely made our mission real, and gave me a sense of what I was doing there."

He explained that while processing through Dhahran, he could tell the military members stationed there because they looked tired, and some were obviously injured.

"What impressed me was that they were still mission oriented," SSgt Bourgeois said. "That they still had enough in them to do their jobs."

First Lt Kris Kasperek, 12th Missile Squadron, was then a senior airman stationed at Patrick AFB, Fla., but had deployed to Kuwait a week after the bombing incident. "I was a little nervous and scared," he said.

His best friend was at Dhahran at the time of the bombing, but fortunately was not injured. He said that as soon as he arrived to Kuwait International Airport, he heard intelligence reports that said another bombing might occur in Kuwait.

He related an incident where he was involved with setting up a work area on a makeshift flightline at an Army post in Kuwait, when a third-country national drove a truck nearby, got out of the truck and left it stranded. It turned out to be a benign incident, but it caused everyone to evacuate the area.

Another Malmstrom person who arrived the day after was SSgt Theresa Lashley, 341st Space Wing historian.

SSgt Lashley, assigned to Langley Air Force Base, Va., at the time, arrived on June 26 and heard that there was a bombing in Saudi hours before she was to depart. She said she was really nervous the whole way over there.

"It was a really intense situation to walk into," SSgt Lashley said. "The first thing we started doing was cleaning up the glass; there was glass everywhere. Then we went to work."

What impressed her most was how people held things together.

"The leadership, especially the first sergeants, were really there for us," SSgt Lashley said. "Even though I arrived a day after the bombing, the folks who lived through it were, after experiencing such a horrible situation, still focused on accomplishing the mission and taking care of one another – there was a real sense of camaraderie."

"Being deployed to Saudi, first during the Gulf War and then again after the Khobar bombing, one thing that was impressed upon me the most was just how important training is," SSgt Lashley said. "I know sometimes it seems as though we train and train, but it is that very same training that will get you through chaotic situations. It's almost like autopilot kicks in and very often it can save your life."

Lt Col Dewald said there was a lot of tension following the bombing, but emphasized that there was no panic. He related that senior officials worked hard to bring back a sense of normalcy to day-to-day activities as soon as they could, which he thought was healthy, but people remained vigilant.

From the Airman's Manual (Air Force Manual 10-100)



Courtesy photo

Khobar Towers, on King Abdul Aziz Air Base, near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, after a terrorist bomb exploded and killed 19 Air Force members in 1996.

here are a few anti-terrorism points to keep in mind:

☐ Keep a low profile – dress and mannerisms should not draw attention; blend in; avoid publicity, large crowds, demonstrations and civil disturbances.

☐ Be unpredictable – vary route, time and mode of travel to work; vary appearance; let others know where you're going and when you plan to return.

☐ Be alert – watch for anything suspicious; don't release personal information; if you feel you're being followed go to a predetermined safe place; report all suspicious incidents to security forces.

Now on the dawn of the five-year anniversary of the Khobar Towers bombing, reports earlier this week relate that federal prosecutors are close to indicting individuals for the incident.

SSgt Bourgeois said he thinks an incident like Khobar Towers is proof-positive that military members need to be more vigilant, and be more aware of the dangers out there.

Lt Col Dewald agreed. "We have valuable assets here at Malmstrom and out in our missile field that are directly related to the defense of our country, so we can be a potential target just like anywhere else," he said.

He related that bombings at Khobar and Oklahoma City show that America isn't immune, especially inside the borders of the United States.

"We think of terrorism as something that happens overseas." But, "it can happen anywhere, and all of us are potential targets," he said.

"It really drove home to me that the security business is not a part-time mission. Protecting your people is a mission priority."

Lt Col Dewald was impressed that everybody pulled together under a crisis situation. "It was probably some of the best teamwork that I've seen in my Air Force career," he said.

He added that he realized that people aren't always prepared. "You can't say it won't ever happen to me. You can't do that anymore in this world. You've got to be ready at all times. A terrorist attack could happen at any time."

☐ RESCUE

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and co-pilot, 1st Lt John R. Beurer, lifted the flight nurse and SSgt McNamara into the aircraft and flew to St. Patrick's Hospital. Roberts was then transferred to Harborview Medical Center in Seattle late Sunday night.

During the flight to St. Patrick's Hospital, TSgt Dianne McLaughlin, a medical technician also assigned to the 341st Medical Group, worked with SSgt McNamara and the mercy flight nurse to treat the injured hiker.

Remember those airmen who died in the Khobar Towers blast

Nineteen Air Force members died in the Khobar Towers bombing June 25, 1996. Those who died are:

Capt Christopher J. Adams; Massapequa Park, N.Y.; Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.
Capt Leland T. Haun; Clovis, Calif.; Patrick AFB
MSGT Michael G. Heiser; Palm Coast, Fla.; Patrick AFB
MSGT Kendall K. Kitson Jr.; Yukon, Okla.; Eglin AFB, Fla.
TSgt Patrick P. Fennig; Greendale, Wis.; Eglin AFB
TSgt Thanh V. Nguyen; Panama City, Fla.; Eglin AFB
SSgt Daniel B. Cafourek; Watertown, S.D.; Eglin AFB
SSgt Kevin J. Johnson; Shreveport, La.; Patrick AFB

SSgt Ronald L. King; Battle Creek, Mich.; Offutt AFB, Neb.
Sgt. Millard D. Campbell; Angleton, Texas; Eglin AFB
SrA Earl F. Cartrette Jr.; Sellersburg, Ind.; Eglin AFB
SrA Jeremy A. Taylor; Rosehill, Kan.; Eglin AFB
A1C Christopher B. Lester; Pineville W.Va.; Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio
A1C Brent E. Marthaler; Cambridge, Minn.; Eglin AFB
A1C Brian W. McVeigh; Debary, Fla.; Eglin AFB
A1C Peter J. Morgera; Stratham, N.H.; Eglin AFB
A1C Joseph E. Rimkus; Edwardsville, Ill.; Eglin AFB
A1C Justin R. Wood; Modesto, Calif.; Patrick AFB
A1C Joshua E. Woody; Corning, Calif.; Eglin AFB